

THE MOURNER.

Upon the ocean's wave-worn shore,  
I mark'd a solitary form,  
Whose brooding brow and features wore,  
The darkness of the coming storm;  
And from his lips the sigh that broke,  
So long within his bosom nurs'd,  
In deep and mournful accents spoke,  
Like troubled waves that shiv'ring burst.

Then as he gaz'd on earth and sea,  
Girt with the gath'ring night,  
His soul, life-wearied, long'd to flee,  
And rest within its final goal.  
He thought of her whose love had beam'd,  
The sunlight of his ripen'd years,  
But now her gentle mem'ry seem'd  
To brim his eye with bitter tears.

"Oh Thou Bless'd Spirit!"—thus he sigh'd—  
"Smile on me from thy realm of rest!  
My dark and doubting spirit guide,  
By conflict torn and grief oppress'd;  
Teach me in ev'ry sadd'ning care,  
To see the chast'ning hand of Heav'n,  
The soul's high culture to prepare,  
Wisely and mercifully giv'n."

"Could I this sacred solace share,  
I would still my struggling bosom's moan,  
And the deep peacefulness of prayer,  
Might for my heavy loss atone.  
Earth in its wreath of summer flowers,  
And all its varied scenes of joy,  
Its festal halls and echoing bowers,  
No more my darken'd thoughts employ.

"But here the billows' heaving breast,  
And the low thunder's knelling tone,  
Speak of the wearied soul's unrest,  
Its murmurings and conflicts lone.  
And yon sweet star, whose golden gleam  
Pierces the tempest's gath'ring gloom,  
In the rich radiance of its beam,  
Tells me of light beyond the tomb!"

N. Y. Christian Inquirer.

UNITY OF GOD.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON,

Delivered before one of the Universalist Associations in Connecticut,

BY REV. D. B. HALLOCK.

Striving together for the faith of the Gospel.—Phil. i. 27.

With this view, let us proceed, first, to notice the objects of faith; and, as the leading and most important one, stands the being of God. As the Apostle says, "they that come to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of all who diligently seek him." To us there is but one God; and in this aspect he is presented in the Gospel; and we think that we have the faith of the Gospel when we believe in the unity, the undivided oneness of Jehovah. This is an important point, one from which we would not be seduced by vain philosophy, or the denunciations of heresy. As the Gospel says nothing of a triune God, we reject the dogma of the Trinity, however it may be surrounded by Athanasian, Calvinian, Hopkinsian, or other ecclesiastical names. We have no sympathy with that hair splitting distinction between *being* and *person*, human nature and *divine* nature, which some theological sages have made. To us, if God is a *person*, he is a Being, one being, one mind, agent or Supreme, undivided, unconnected with, and independent of, any other being or person in the universe. When our Saviour said, "There is none good but one, and that is God;" when Paul said to us, "There is one God, even the Father;" we have no intimation given that they intended to be understood as meaning something different from the unity of any other person or being. There is no more reason to believe that they regarded the Deity as possessed of a three-fold nature, than we have that the sacred penman regarded Joseph as a triune being, when he said he was a "goodly person." The idea of three persons in one being, is a solecism. The meaning of *person* is just as obvious to ordinary minds as the sun, and it is no more necessary to enquire what is understood by personality, to ascertain what is meant by a person; than it is to find out the physical essence of the sun to know what object is called by that name. One person means one intelligent being, and two persons must mean two intelligent beings, and so on. To say, then, that the one self-existent God is three self-existent persons, is the same as to say that he is three self-existent intelligent beings, which involves a palpable contradiction.

The arguments employed to prove the doctrine of the Trinity, to my mind just as clearly prove that there are three Gods in one; as they do that there are three persons in one God. The Trinitarian will tell us that the Son is God; he creates; he is omniscient and omnipotent; he is Mediator—the Father is not. The Holy Ghost is God; he convicts of sin, regenerates and sanctifies the sinner. Here we have three persons, or intelligent beings or agents, each acting in

his own sphere and office; each having his own will, consciousness and identity; and if they do not constitute three distinct and positive beings, we do not know how to express the idea of three intelligent beings. Is Christ a person, and not a being? Is the Holy Ghost a person, yet not a being? Or is the word person, when applied to God, so entirely different from its usual and natural sense? When we hear of three persons loving each other, and conversing with each other and performing separate and distinct offices, how can we come to any other rational conclusion, than that Father, Son and Holy Ghost are three different intelligent beings, minds, and agents? We can as easily see how three Washingtons can make *one man*, as three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, can make one God. The object of our faith presented in the Gospel, is the Father. He alone is God. He is one person. No one is equal to him in the universe, nor can be; and we may challenge the whole Christian world to produce a single passage from the New Testament in which the term God means three persons. On the contrary, the word, as well as the term Father, is limited to one individual and undivided being. The doctrine of three persons in the Godhead is not a doctrine of the Gospel; hence a faith in this doctrine is not the faith of the Gospel.

So entirely do the Scriptures abstain from stating the Trinity, (says a distinguished divine,) that when men would insert it into their creeds and dogmologies, they are compelled to leave the Bible, and to invent forms of words altogether un sanctioned by Scriptural phraseology. That a doctrine so strange, so liable to misrepresentation, so fundamental as this is said to be, and requiring such careful exposition, should be left so undefined and unprotected, to be made out by inference, and to be hunted through distant and detached parts of Scripture, this is a difficulty which, we think, no ingenuity can explain."

It is well known that Christianity, from its first introduction into the world, has had to contend with all kinds of opposition.—More especially had Christ and the Apostles many objections to answer, much prejudice to overcome, and violent opponents to contend with. Now if the doctrine of the Trinity had been insisted on by the Apostles; if this had been a fundamental object of Christian faith, there can be no question but the Pharisees and Judaizing teachers, who held to the unity of God, would have raised their voice against it. They did oppose the doctrine of the resurrection, and that of salvation by grace; and why is it that in none of the Apostles' writings, not one word is said of there being any opposition to the Trinity? There can hardly be a doubt, it seems to me, that if the first preachers of the Gospel, beginning at Jerusalem, had proclaimed the doctrine of three infinite and equal persons in the Godhead, we should hardly have had a single epistle or book in the New Testament, that is destitute of defence and explanation, and strong arguments, in reference to it. But what is the fact? Not a word is uttered, not a hint dropped, of the controversies and reproaches and misapprehensions relative to the Trinity. If a man must be burned with a fire of green wood in the sixteenth century of the Christian Church, for denying this doctrine, can it be supposed that the doctrine of the Trinity could be preached and denied and controverted in the primitive days of Christianity, and not a trace of its history be found in all the New Testament? This, to us, is an unanswerable argument for the position that the Trinity, in the Apostles' times, was not regarded as any part or portion of the faith of the Gospel. Besides this, we may observe that not only our Saviour, but his Apostles, insisted on the duty of worshipping the true God, the Father.—Are we to suppose that they left their hearers in a divided, distracted state of mind in regard to the proper and real object of love and devotion and praise? If they presented three coequal, infinite persons, for their adoration, whom would they prefer—or must they worship them all? We think this is the manifest tendency of the doctrine, to distract and disturb that singleness of mind, that ardent veneration for the one only living and true God, which ought to pervade the mind of the worshipper. If, as is contended, that angels and men worshipped Christ, ought we not to worship him now? When we worship God, do we worship Christ and the Holy Ghost at the same time? If we do not, do we not withhold from them their due? If they are persons, equal in power, substance and glory, with the Father, shall we not render them divine homage? We regard the Trinity as unfriendly to that spirit of true devotion, that concentrated, undivided affection, and that supreme homage which God requires at our hands.

The faith of the Gospel, then, for which we are to strive together, has not, for one of its objects, a triune God; but the one God

who is above all, and Lord of all! Here is but *one being, one person*, one infinite Father, in whom all the temporal and spiritual blessings of the race meet as their source and centre! To him alone should we render the homage of our hearts; from him alone cometh down every good and perfect gift. We may say with Derzhavin:

"Thou from primeval nothingness didst call  
First chaos, then existence—Lord! on thee  
Eternity had its foundation; all  
Sprung forth from thee;—of light, joy, harmony  
Sole origin; all life, all beauty thine.  
Yes! in thy spirit doth thy spirit shine,  
As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew!  
Weak! yet I live, and on Hope's pinions fly  
Eager toward thy presence; for in thee  
I live, and breathe, and dwell, aspiring high,  
Even to the throne of thy divinity,  
I am, oh God, and surely thou must be!"

The faith of the Gospel, then, recognizes Jehovah as the one living and true God; there is none beside him. He is God alone, not as Mr. Emmons says, "there is something in the Divine Being which renders it necessary that he should exist in three persons." Not as Dr. Spring says, "His indivisible essence comprises three distinct persons." Not as Dr. Hopkins and others hold, that he is three in one. Not as the Presbyterian Confession of Faith says, "In unity of the Godhead there be three persons of one substance, power and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." But as one being, one person, one supreme intelligent God, who is over all, and above all, and the Father of all.

Second, Jesus Christ is the object of the faith of the Gospel. The necessity and importance of believing in Christ can hardly be questioned, when we refer to his own language: "This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."—"This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Lord, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."—"Jesus saith unto Martha, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." When the jailor at Philippi asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"—they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." "It is the commandment of God, (says John,) that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ." When Philip was about to baptize the eunuch, he said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized." Believest what? He had just preached to him Jesus, and the eunuch's answer, shows the object of his faith: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

We need not continue these quotations; what have been cited are sufficient to show the importance of faith, and what is one of its prime objects. Now the question arises, and one of some consequence: what must we believe? Must we believe that Jesus Christ is the second person in the adorable Trinity? That he is the Creator of heaven and earth? Or that he is very and eternal God? Must we believe that he was sent of the Father to purchase the divine favor, and ward off the uplifted sword of his vengeance, that flashed over a guilty world? Must we believe with the Confession of Faith, that it was requisite that Christ should be God, that he might be sustained under the infinite wrath of God? that he suffered to satisfy divine justice, and received the punishment on his own innocent person that was due to transgressors? Must we believe with Calvin, that Christ actually descended into hell, and endured the torments of a soul damned to eternal fire?—Must we believe that our sins were imputed to him, and his righteousness is imputed to us? Are these, or is any one of these, what is meant by having faith in Christ, or what we are to understand by the faith of the Gospel? Is this the faith for which we are to strive together; which we are to encourage and promote among men; which is to work by love and purify the heart; which is to sustain us in sorrow, comfort us in tribulation, and give us the victory over death and the grave? We do not believe it is. The Scriptures as truly and as uniformly represent the oneness of Christ, his distinct and personal unity, as they do that of God. He is not a person of threefold being, but a person or being of himself—he was as truly *one* as one of you or myself is *one*.

We have objected to the doctrine of the Trinity, because it makes the Deity to consist of three intelligent beings; it also makes Christ to consist of *two beings*. When we produce the saying of Christ, "my Father is greater than I"—ah! that means we are told, his human nature! When we say God could not hunger, and suffer, and die,

we are told he had two natures—the human and the divinity; the one was weak, subject to death and pain as we are, the other was Almighty; the one was ignorant, and the other omniscient; the one was a man, and the other was a God. Then he was two beings, as much as man is one and God is one. We regard such a view as this not only repugnant to the plain dictates of common sense, but as unscriptural, and a corruption and deformity of Christianity. According to this hypothesis, Christ had two distinct, separate natures. One did not sympathize with the other—it had no congeniality or fellowship with it. One was a God, and therefore could not hunger nor thirst, nor suffer, nor die; the other was a man, and did all of these. There was the *will of man*, the *mind of man*, and the *will and mind of God* mysteriously combined in him. This seems to us a tax too great to lay on mortal credulity.

When our Lord asked Peter the question, "Whom say ye that I am?" and Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus approved the reply, and gave him to understand that his faith was right; but in these days of theological light, it is rank heresy to believe that Christ is simply the *Son of God*; we must believe that he is God himself.

We have no intimation given in the sacred Scriptures, by the disciples and apostles who heard the gracious words of our Saviour, that some things which he said proceeded from the divine nature, and others from the human. Nor do we ever find him saying, this I speak as a man, that as a God; this I perform as a human being, and that I do as a divine being; this is the result of my human will, and that of my divine will. No, Christ was one being, one person, one mind, and as distinct and identical as Moses or Paul.

When our Saviour directed his disciples to pray to the Father, did he intend to have them pray to himself? When he told them that God had clothed the field, and provided for the birds of heaven, and caused his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sent his rain on the just and the unjust, did he mean to be understood that it was he himself, Christ, that did these? We are certain he did not. How then was Jesus Christ verily the eternal God? By a careful examination of the passages which define the identity and distinct personality of God and Christ, we find that they plainly represent him as another being besides the Father, as subordinate to the Father, as being sent, and anointed, and delegated, and empowered by the Father, and of himself able to do nothing. The Scriptures, especially the New Testament, abounds with such language. Who could have thought from this language that Christ was the Eternal God? That instead of being the Son, he was also the Father, instead of being the one sent, he was the very being who sent the Mediator; instead of being the dependent, suppliant and confiding Son, who prayed to the Almighty, he was himself that Almighty Creator and Jehovah!

I know that it will be said there are passages which ascribe to Christ creative power, omniscience, eternity, and other attributes of the Deity. We have not time, nor is it necessary to cite them and examine them, but this we may remark, they are comparatively very few in proportion to those that plainly define the supremacy of the Father and the inferiority of the Son; and we only ask our opposing brethren to put these passages to the same test that they do other passages whose literal and unqualified sense would involve an absurdity, or a contradiction. For example, we are commanded to eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ. Our Trinitarian brethren can explain this so as to have it afford no evidence of the strange dogma of transubstantiation; and when it is said "The Lord revengeth," and is angry, and jealous, and that he has hands, and eyes, and feet, and wings and feathers; when it is said, "We must hate father and mother," &c., they can explain all such passages so as to accord with reason, and the general tenor of Scripture. The same rule of interpretation would bring the strongest texts employed by Trinitarians, in perfect harmony and keeping with the unity of God and of Christ; with the truth of the Scripture, "My Father is greater than I, my Father is greater than all." "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

N. Y. Christian Messenger.

Printed for the Committee of  
THE MONTREAL UNITARIAN SOCIETY,  
AND PUBLISHED MONTHLY,  
JOSEPH W. HARRISON, PRINTER.